Indictments Grew Out of the Dictagraph Episode and the Letters Which Followed.

Formal investigation into the invectives hurled between Colonel Thomas B. Felder and Detective Chief Newport Lanford resulted yesterday in indictments of criminal libel being returned by the grand jury against each of them for their cards and interviews in the daily papers in which they attacked each other's character, after the dictagraph row.

Colonel Felder is held under two indictments on a bond of $500, while Chief Lanford has one indictment against him, and is free on the same bond.

The offenses charged against each are misdemeanors, and the punishment, in case of conviction, is six months in the county jail, twelve months in the penitentiary or a fine of not more than $1,000. It is in the discretion of the judge to impose any or all of these penalties after conviction.

In order to come clear at the trial it will be necessary for the man indicted for criminal libel to prove that the charges he made were true, and it is expected that the cases will develop into the most bitterly fought in the history of the Fulton courts.

Felder Will Not Talk.

Shortly after his indictment Colonel Felder appeared in the solicitor's office and was told of the two indictments. He appeared to think for a moment that he was being jailed. When he saw the bills his only comment was that he "didn't give a darn."

He refused to make any further statement on the matter and declined to discuss what steps he would take to clear himself of the libel charges.

Chief Lanford made only the comment that he could prove every charge he had ever made against Colonel Felder, but he declined to discuss the matter at length.

Both Colonel Felder and Chief Lanford are indicted for the articles that appeared in The Atlanta Constitution and other Sunday

papers on June 8, and Colonel Felder is also indicted on another bill for alleged libel in connection with his famous letter addressed to "The People of Atlanta" and published in The Constitution of May 25.

It was in the latter article that Colonel Felder referred to the detective head as the "Lieutenant Becker of our ‘system'" and also charged that since the arrest of Leo M. Frank and Newt Lee, charged as suspects in the murder of Mary Phagan, that the detective chief had been protecting them.

It is charged in the bill of indictment that Colonel Felder did maliciously, unlawfully and intending to injure and vilify the reputation of Lanford, write and cause to be published the letter referred to, a great part of which is copied upon the indictment.

Charges Against Lanford.

The indictments against Colonel Felder and against Chief Lanford for their articles of June 8, which appeared in the Atlanta papers, are practically similar in form. Lanford is charged with calling Colonel Felder "a contemptible liar and a scoundrel," and accusing him of grafting and of pretending to raise a fund for the prosecution of the murderer of the Phagan child.

Colonel Felder's article on June 3 was full of bitter invectives against the detective chief, whom he accused of graft, and who, he declared, was a disgrace and dishonor to the office he held.

All three of the indictments were returned as "special presentments" by the grand jury, which indicates that the investigations leading up to them were taken up at the volition of the members, and that no outsider appeared as prosecutor.

The only witnesses used in finding the basis for the indictments were newspaper men by whom the grand jurors proved that the articles in question had actually come from the men whose names were given as the authors of them.

In all the grand jury probably put less than an hour's time upon the question before returning its true bills, and the case was taken up in the interim of routine criminal business.